WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A food product, comprising:

at least about 15% by weight of meat, based upon the weight of the food product; and

from about 5% to about 60% by weight of wheat flour, based upon the weight of the food product,

wherein the food product is in the form of a flexible, rotary-molded strip.

2. A food product according to Claim 1, wherein the meat is at least one of beef or chicken.

3. A food product according to Claim 1, further comprising a binding agent selected from the group consisting of a starch, a gum, and combinations thereof.

4. A food product according to Claim 1, further comprising a cold-water-soluble starch.

5. A food product according to Claim 1, wherein the food product has a water activity of from about 0.65 to about 0.75.

6. A food product according to Claim 1, wherein the strip-shaped food product has a wavy shape and can be bent so that opposing ends of the strip-shaped food product touch each other without breakage of the strip.

7. A food product according to Claim 1, wherein the strip-shaped food product is a pet snack.

8. A method of making a food product, comprising:

(a) comminuting raw meat;

(b) cooking the comminuted raw meat;

(c) cooling the cooked meat;

(d) admixing the cooled meat with wheat flour to obtain a dough, wherein the dough comprises about 4% by weight to about 45% by weight of wheat flour and at least about 35% by weight of the cooked meat, based upon the weight of the dough;

(e) rotary molding the dough to form a plurality of strip-shaped individual pieces;

(f) baking the strip-shaped individual pieces; and

(g) drying the baked, strip-shaped individual pieces to form a flexible, strip-shaped food product.

9. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, where the raw meat is substantially frozen.

10. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, wherein the raw meat is at least one of chicken and beef.

11. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, wherein the raw meat comprises mechanically separated meat.

12. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, further comprising adding a binding agent selected from the group consisting of a starch, a gum, and combinations thereof to the cooked meat.

13. A method of making a food product according to Claim 12, wherein the binding agent comprises a cold-water-soluble starch.

14. A method of making a food product according to Claim 13, wherein the binding agent further comprises guar gum.

15. A method of making a food product according to Claim 13, wherein about 1% to about 20% by weight, based upon the weight of the dough, of the cold-water-soluble starch is added to the cooked meat.

16. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, further comprising adding at least one liquid ingredient to the cooked meat.

17. A method of making a food product according to Claim 16, wherein the at least one liquid ingredient is selected from the group consisting of a humectant, a seasoning, an acidic substance, and combinations thereof.

18. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, further comprising adding dry ingredients to the cooked meat.

19. A method of making a food product according to Claim 18, wherein the dry ingredients are in the form of a preblend.

20. A method of making a food product according to Claim 19, wherein the preblend comprises at least one dry ingredient selected from the group consisting of a binding agent, a humectant, a seasoning, a preservative, and an antioxidant.

21. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, further comprising adding at least one filler selected from the group consisting of rice flour, oat fiber, and wheat middlings to the cooked meat.

22. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, wherein the cooling is conducted under a vacuum.

23. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, wherein the dough comprises about 35% to about 75% by weight of meat, based upon the weight of the dough.

24. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, wherein the rotary molding of the dough comprises rotary molding with an rotary die roll having angled die cups.

25. A method of making a food product according to Claim 8, wherein the strip-shaped food product is a pet snack.

26. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product without substantial reduction in tensile strength of the food product, comprising:

(a) comminuting raw meat;

(b) cooking the comminuted raw meat;

(c) adding a salt to the meat prior to or during said cooking of the comminuted raw meat;

(d) cooling the cooked meat;

(e) admixing additional ingredients with the cooled meat to obtain a dough, wherein the dough comprises 35% to about 75% by weight of cooked meat;

(f) rotary-molding the dough to form a plurality of strip-shaped individual pieces;

(g) baking the strip-shaped individual pieces; and

(h) drying the baked, strip-shaped individual pieces to form a flexible, strip-shaped food product.

27. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein the salt is sodium chloride or potassium chloride.

28. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein the salt is admixed with the comminuted raw meat prior to cooking.

29. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein the salt is admixed with the comminuted raw meat during cooking.

30. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein the water activity of the strip-shaped food product is about 0.65 to about 0.75.

31. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein about 4% by weight to about 45% by weight of wheat flour, based upon the weight of the dough, is admixed with the cooked meat.

32. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein about 10% by weight to about 40% by weight of wheat flour, based upon the weight of the dough, is admixed with the cooked meat.

33. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, further comprising adding a binding agent selected from the group consisting of a starch, a gum, and combinations thereof to the cooked meat.

34. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 33, wherein the binding agent comprises a cold-water-soluble starch.

35. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 34, wherein the binding agent further comprises guar gum.

36. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 34, wherein about 1% to about 20% by weight, based upon the weight of the dough, of the cold-water-soluble starch is admixed with the cooked meat.

37. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein at least one liquid ingredient is admixed with the cooked meat.

38. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 37, wherein the at least one liquid ingredient is selected from the group consisting of a humectant, a seasoning, and an acidic substance.

39. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein at least one dry ingredient is admixed with the cooked meat.

40. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 39, wherein the at least one dry ingredient is in the form of a preblend.

41. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 40, wherein the preblend comprises at least one dry ingredient selected from the group consisting of a binding agent, a humectant, a seasoning, a preservative, an antioxidant, and combinations thereof.

42. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein the rotary molding of the dough comprises rotary molding with a rotary die roll having angled die cups.

43. A method of increasing the water activity of a food product according to Claim 26, wherein the strip-shaped food product is a pet snack.

44. A method of making a food product, comprising:

(a) comminuting raw meat;

(b) cooking the comminuted raw meat;

(c) cooling the cooked meat;

(d) admixing the cooled meat with wheat flour to form a dough comprising about 4% by weight to about 45% by weight wheat flour, based upon the weight of the dough; and

(e) rotary-molding the dough with a rotary die roll having angled die cups to form a plurality of pieces; and

(f) baking the plurality of pieces in an oven.

45. A method of making a food product according to Claim 44, wherein a tangent line from a front portion of a longitudinal leading edge of a strip-shaped piece or a die cup to a trailing portion of the longitudinal leading edge of the strip-shaped piece or the die cup is at an angle of about 5° to about 90° relative to an outer surface line that is parallel to a central longitudinal axis of the rotary die roll or to a transverse axis of a conveyor belt or oven band upon which the strip-shaped piece is deposited from the die cup.

46. A method of making a food product according to Claim 44, wherein a tangent line from a front portion of a longitudinal leading edge of a strip-shaped piece or a die cup to a trailing portion of the longitudinal leading edge of the strip-shaped piece or the die cup is at an angle of about 10° to about 60° relative to an outer surface line that is parallel to a central longitudinal axis of the rotary die roll or to a transverse axis of a conveyor belt or oven band upon which the strip-shaped piece is deposited from the die cup.

47. A method of making a food product according to Claim 44, wherein a tangent line from a front portion of a longitudinal leading edge of a strip-shaped piece or a die cup to a trailing portion of the longitudinal leading edge of the strip-shaped piece or the die cup is at an angle of about 20° to about 40° relative to an outer surface line that is parallel to a central longitudinal axis of the rotary die roll or to a transverse axis of a conveyor belt or oven band upon which the strip-shaped piece is deposited from the die cup.

48. A method of making a food product according to Claim 44, wherein a tangent line from a front portion of a longitudinal leading edge of a strip-shaped piece or a die cup to a trailing portion of the longitudinal leading edge of the strip-shaped piece or the die cup is at an angle of about 30° relative to an outer surface line that is parallel to a central longitudinal axis of the rotary die roll or to a transverse axis of a conveyor belt or oven band upon which the strip-shaped piece is deposited from the die cup.

49. A rotary die roll comprising a plurality of angled die cups, wherein a tangent line from a front portion of a longitudinal leading edge of a strip-shaped piece or a die cup to a trailing portion of the longitudinal leading edge of the strip-shaped piece or the die cup is at an angle of about 5° to about 90° relative to an outer surface line that is

parallel to a central longitudinal axis of the rotary die roll or to a transverse axis of a conveyor belt or oven band upon which the strip-shaped piece is deposited from the die cup.

50. A rotary die roll according to Claim 49, wherein a tangent line from a front portion of a longitudinal leading edge of a strip-shaped piece or a die cup to a trailing portion of the longitudinal leading edge of the strip-shaped piece or the die cup is at an angle of about 10° to about 60° relative to an outer surface line that is parallel to a central longitudinal axis of the rotary die roll or to a transverse axis of a conveyor belt or oven band upon which the strip-shaped piece is deposited from the die cup.

51. A rotary die roll according to Claim 49, wherein a tangent line from a front portion of a longitudinal leading edge of a strip-shaped piece or a die cup to a trailing portion of the longitudinal leading edge of the strip-shaped piece or the die cup is at an angle of about 20° to about 40° relative to an outer surface line that is parallel to a central longitudinal axis of the rotary die roll or to a transverse axis of a conveyor belt or oven band upon which the strip-shaped piece is deposited from the die cup.

52. A rotary die roll according to Claim 49, wherein a tangent line from a front portion of a longitudinal leading edge of a strip-shaped piece or a die cup to a trailing portion of the longitudinal leading edge of the strip-shaped piece or the die cup is at an angle of about 30° relative to an outer surface line that is parallel to a central longitudinal axis of the rotary die roll or to a transverse axis of a conveyor belt or oven band upon which the strip-shaped piece is deposited from the die cup.

53. A rotary die roll according to Claim 49, wherein the die cups have a wavy shape configuration.